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GILDING.

One of the most important applications of gilding is to the baser metals, any ornamentation in which it seems to render more attractive bringing out the details in higher relief, whether covering the whole or the more prominent portions. It materially aids in contrasting effects, as in the deepening of shadows in floriated work, just as important in cast and wrought metal as in carved wood work. Covering the lines of grooved columns, it gives the appearance of greater vitality. In chandeliers and brass standards and various metal household fixtures, it finds especial use.

Copper and brass may be gilded by applying a gold amalgam with a brush, this amalgam consisting of gold and mercury. The article is then exposed to heat, when the mercury is volatilized, and a film of gold remains. Gilding wax is then applied, and the surface is exposed to the fire until the wax is burnished. Next, nitre and alum ground together and mixed as a paste are applied, and after again exposing the surface to heat and washing it with water, the color is brought up by rubbing with agate polish. The whole is then burnished or left mat in whole or in part. The fire gilt gold thus applied presents great solidity and beauty.

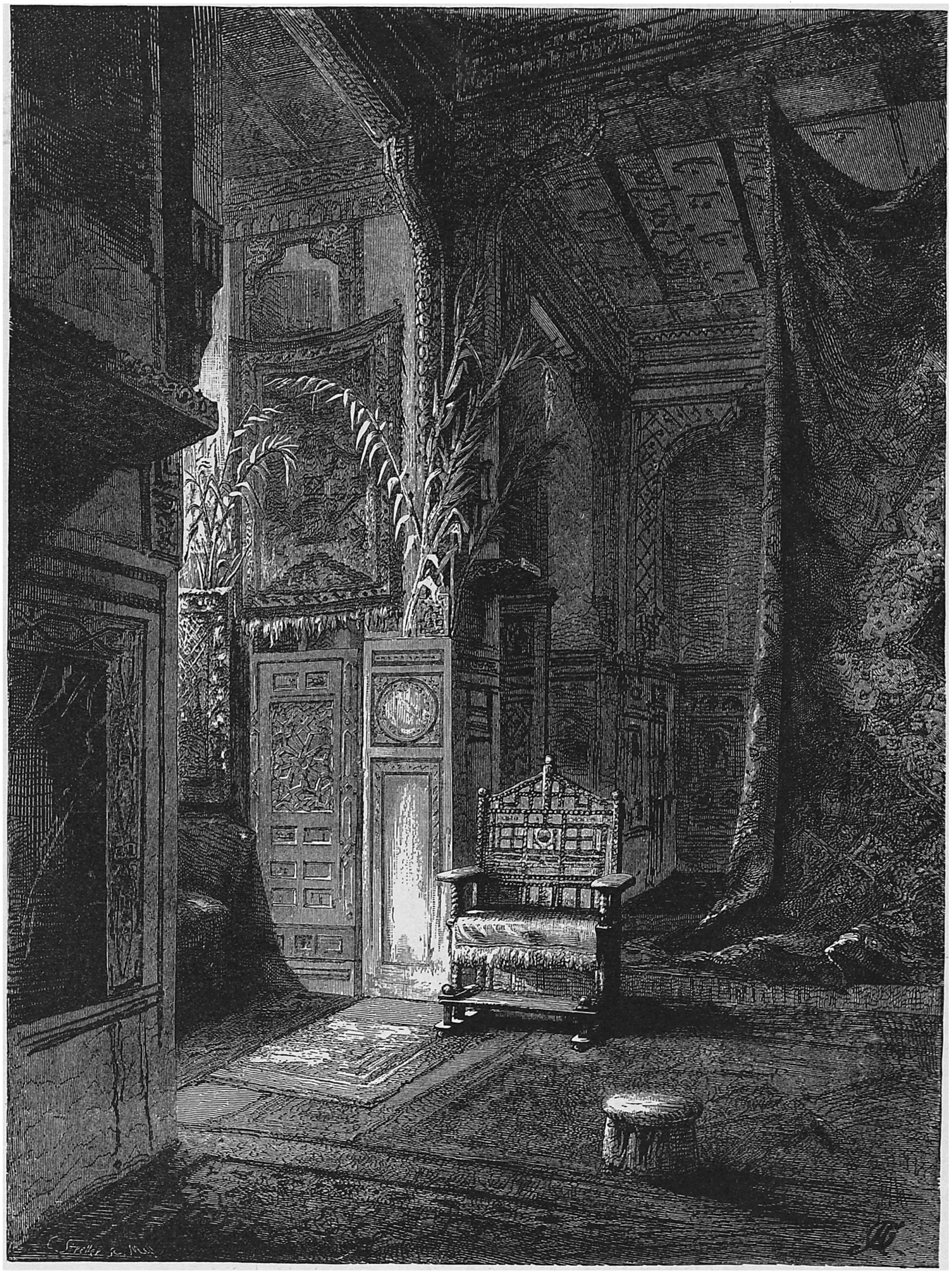
For gilding steel, an etherial solution of gold can be obtained, into which the article to be gilded is dipped. On being exposed to the air the ether evaporates and the gold remains. Instead of dipping, the gold may be applied by a sponge lightly saturated with the solution, which is passed over the surface. Polished iron and steel may be heated to a temperature of red heat, and then pressing the leaf on with a brush. The articles are then reheated, when additional leaf is laid on. Silver is coated by a solution of gold or aqua regia applied with a linen rag, after which it is rubbed with fine linen or cork.

Illumination in colors and gold constitutes a really delightful employment. Reference here is only made to it so far as gilding is concerned. The materials are gold leaf, shell gold and gilding paint. When this is used, the letters are made by means of a fine brush dipped in a preparation of lead or chalk ground up with strong size, the gold leaf being laid on this mixture when nearly dry, and afterwards burnished. Another method is to write the letters with a quill pen in ordinary ink mixed with size, breathing on the surface when it is dry and instantly applying a slight pressure. The parts not adhering are afterwards wiped off. A third method is to apply to the paper or vellum, by means of a brush dipped in gold powder with size.

Shell gold is gold powder mixed up and placed in mussel shells for use. The brush for this purpose is first moistened with water. Shell gold is well adapted for fine lines. All gold thus imposed is heightened by burnishing. A dry gilding powder that may be used on gold size is made up by mixing two packages of bronze and four yellow gilt packages.

There are modes of heightening the gilding, as by applying a fine pencil brush dipped in vermilion, yellow gold, green gold, or red gold composition. The yellow gold composition is composed of saltpetre, copperas, white vitriol, and alum; the green gold of saltpetre, vitriol, sal ammonia, and verdigris; the red gold of powdered ochre, calcined verdigris, and borax.

It is frequently a cause of vexation to find costly "gold frames" tarnished or lacking lustre. If the moldings themselves are uninjured, and the gold intact, the means of restoring the lost lustre are simple. All that is necessary is to wash the surface of the frame with a sponge lightly saturated with hot spirits of wine, or oil of turpentine. There must be no wiping, but the moisture must be left to dry. The gold frames of old paintings, lustreless and blackened with age, are often allowed to deface the walls of parlors, drawing-rooms, and libraries, under the impression that being old they are quite in keeping with the paintings, which thus lose the obviously-intended advantage of a brilliant setting. Ordinarily old frames prove to be more heavily gilded than is now the practice, and when thus treated, will accordingly present a pleasing appearance of solidity. Should any portions of the gilding prove to be abraded, apply oil-gold size and gold leaf to the parts, finally giving the whole surface a coat of clear light parchment size.



CHAMBER OF MOUSAFFIV-KHANA, THE ROOM WHEREIN WAS BORN THE KHEDIVE ISMAIL.

DECORATION BY COLOR.

DECORATION serves no purpose to things, it is solely for the eyes, but it should have the appearance of serving things; to them it is as dress, and should bring out good points of construction, offset defects, and avoid displaying itself.

Its rule is immediate satisfaction to the eye; to the mind lasting satisfaction when novelty has gone and all the points are known.

Decoration cannot be arbitrary. You may, if you please, paint the floor deep blue, the ceiling brown, the walls black, but if there is no apparent reason for such an upsetting of nature, one cannot like your room; it is reasonable to color a ceiling blue or gray, a floor dark, and the side wall to represent an atmosphere of color lighter than the more solid woodwork, because all this is after the order of nature; light comes from the blue or gray sky, the ground is dark and the broad spaces are always filled with air.

It is reasonable to make the hall color darker, because rooms opening from it then appear lighter; besides, it is narrow and they are wide, and should look wider. Dark and red things come nearer light and bluish colors are farther away. We do not see blue dots and red dots at a certain distance at the same time.

A somewhat dark wall color gives a cosy room if there is light enough, and perhaps for the same reason that a quiet nook in the woods is cosy—*protective* shade, quiet and rest are associated ideas. In a wide room light walls seem carried away, but in a little room light wall colors and blue curtains enlarge and make its littleness pleasanter than mere bigness.

Who decorates for the mind works mindful of all little discoveries which people are sure to make who are seeing a thing day by day. Decoration for the eye alone grows poor by looking at; richness is not in display, but in these discoveries of little things: little tones, little illusions, little touches of nature, little fitnesses to incidentals in carrying out a little idea—itself not of any importance, merely a pleasant conceit.

The difficulty of using color richly lies in the richness of little tones in natural coloring. Natural colors are somewhat dull, the blue sky is the only large expanse of pure bright color, but every natural thing is toned. Grass is nearly green to yellowish, blueish or purplish, or gray, a blending of many shades.

Nature's method gives a toned color, and then in the grass a red or a yellow flower as local color. This local color satisfies the desire for variety by adding to a harmony of tones a harmony of contrasted color. If the flower be examined, its effects also will be found due to tones of one color; we must look at flowers one by one to enjoy them fully.—*Painting.*

LEATHER portières are not uncommon.